

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

5 1. An apparatus for forming a bathtub liner over an existing bathtub comprising:

- a container defining a cavity;
- a seal associated with cavity, the seal capable of forming a substantially continuous seal with a bathtub liner;
- a heating element capable of heating the cavity; and
- means for increasing pressure within the cavity, to in turn, force a bathtub liner outwardly, away from the cavity, whereupon positioning of the liner and apparatus over a existing bathtub will force the liner toward an existing bathtub.

10 2. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the container further comprises:

- a top surface; and
- a plurality of side walls associated with the top surface.

15 3. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the container further comprises a compensating member.

20 4. The apparatus of claim 3 wherein the container further comprises a length compensating member and a width compensating member.

5. The apparatus of claim 3 wherein the compensating member comprises a kit which includes a plurality of compensating members.

5 6. The apparatus of claim 5 wherein the kit is capable of adapting the apparatus to correspond to an existing bathtub that is between four and six feet in length.

7. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein at least a portion of the container comprises a substantially transparent member.

10 8. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the plurality side walls define a lower perimeter, the seal member extending about the perimeter defined by the plurality of side walls.

15 9. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the heating element comprises a heater member positioned within the cavity.

10. The apparatus of claim 9 wherein the heating element comprises an electric heater being selectively activated.

20 11. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the pressure increasing means comprises at least one air compressor in fluid communication with the cavity of the container.

12. The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising a weight associated with the container, to, in turn, enhance the effectiveness of the seal member.

13. The apparatus of claim 12 wherein the weight comprises a container having at least one of an inlet and an outlet, the container being capable of storing a predetermined quantity of fluid therein.

14. A method of forming a bathtub liner comprising the steps of:

- providing a suitably sized liner for an existing bathtub;
- positioning a liner over the existing bathtub;
- positioning a bathtub forming apparatus over the liner, the apparatus having a cavity;
- heating the liner to a sufficient temperature to permit deformation;
- pressurizing the cavity formed by the liner and the bathtub forming apparatus; and
- deforming the liner.

15. The method of claim 14 wherein the step of providing a liner comprises the steps of:

- measuring the existing bathtub; and
- sizing the liner to the measurements of the existing bathtub.

20 16. The method of claim 14 further comprising the step of:

- forming a skirt member prior to the step of positioning the liner over the existing bathtub.

17. The method of claim 14 wherein the step of positioning the bathtub liner apparatus comprises at least one of the steps of:

- adjusting the length of the bathtub liner apparatus; and
- adjusting the width of the bathtub liner apparatus.

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18. The method of claim 14 wherein the step of heating comprises the steps of:

- activating an electric heating member positioned within the cavity.

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19. The method of claim 14 wherein the step of pressurizing the cavity comprises the steps of:

- providing an air compressor;
- placing the air compressor in fluid communication with the cavity; and
- activating the air compressor.

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20. The method of claim 14 wherein the step of deforming comprises the step of deforming the liner to substantially follow the contours of the existing bathtub.

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21. The method of claim 14 further comprising the step of positioning a grate within the existing bathtub prior to positioning the liner.

22. The method of claim 14 further comprising the step of cooling the liner after the step of deformation.

23. The method of claim 14 further comprising the step of depressurizing the cavity.

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24. The method of claim 14 further comprising the steps of:

- removing the formed liner;
- applying an adhering means to at least one of the existing bathtub and the liner; and
- replacing the formed liner into position relative to the existing bathtub.

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25. The method of claim 24 further comprising the step of caulking between the existing area of the bathtub and the liner.

26. The method of claim 14 further comprising the steps of:

- determining the desired positioning of at least one of an overflow opening and a drain on the liner after deformation; and
- forming openings through the liner to correspond to the desired positioning of at least one of the overflow opening and drain.